

"Raising Abel!"

Text: Gen. 4:5, "But for Cain and his offering He had no regard. So Cain was very angry and his countenance fell."

Scripture Gen. 4:1-15

(Joke or illustration to begin)

From the story of Cain and Abel there is a lot that is said, but there is also a lot that is left unsaid. We read in the first part of this 4th chapter how Abel was a keeper of sheep and Cain was a tiller of the ground. One is a shepherd and one a farmer. Both worthwhile and reputable occupations. Then we read how Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground and Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock as an offering to God. Then we read that the Lord had regard for Abels offering, but that He had no regard for the offering of Cain. There have been several theories presented as to ~~why this~~ how and why the Lord would regard one and not the other. The first theory is that Abel brought an animal offering that could be sacrificed, and it required the shedding of the animals blood for the cleansing of sin, and since what Cain brought was probably cereal or grain as an offering, it was not the proper type of offering. Now if this theory is correct we must ask the question, "Where does it state that Cain and Abel were told to bring an animal offering?" The answer of course is that this is not a part of the text, and it is not spelled out as such.

A second theory advanced is that what Abel brought was an animal without spot or blemish and what Cain brought to be offered to the Lord was less than the very best fruit of the ground. This is a more plausible explanation and would explain why God would have regard for the offering of Abel and not have regard for the offering of Cain. ~~This~~ It is also from this theory that we derive our thinking about bringing the very best we have to God.

But along with this we can also see the logical progression of sin in ~~the~~ world and in the life of man, stemming from the original sin of Adam and Eve in the garden. We read in the 5th verse, "But for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry and his countenance fell." Thus we see the firstfruits of sin. We see not only outward anger, but we see

hatred and jealousy as well, & All because someone is looked upon with more
do
error. Now I ~~would~~ not mean to imply that Abel was more special in the sight
of God, and thereby received special recognition, but by this story we must
realize that something Abel did, placed his offering ahead of that of Cain.
Hence, we must believe that on the strength of what we read, Abel's offering
must have been better than that of Cain. If we look at the progression of
feelings that Cain must have lived through, we can see that each one of them
is still with us today and need to be dealt with in our lives.

Cain must have had an intense feeling of jealousy because of the statement,
"and his countenance fell." In other words he was dissatisfied ~~in~~ because
his offering was not received by God in the same as Abel's. Thus Cain was
giving vent to an intense feeling that if left uncontrolled, gnaws and eats
at a person's very insides until it erupts in some flagrant act toward the
person to whom it is directed. Webster's dictionary defines jealousy as
someone who is "resentful, or envious." St. Chrysostom says, "As a moth
gnaws a garment so doth envy consume a man."

From all of this we can readily gather that jealousy is something from
which we need to be delivered before it consumes the individual completely
and leads to dire consequences.

Cain was guilty of an overwhelming hatred for his brother ~~xx~~ for we read,
"So Cain was very angry." Anger is another emotion that needs to be con-
trolled. Uncontrolled anger has perhaps been responsible for more deaths and
bodily injury than perhaps any other emotion. Victor Hugo once said, "Pride
robs me of God, envy of my neighbor, anger of myself." So from this one
short verse we can see that Cain became inflamed with jealousy, anger and
a consuming hatred for his brother. So much so, that he lured him out into
a field and killed him. Thus we can see where Cain's actions separated him
from God. And even to this day what is it we say when someone is involved
in flagrant wrongdoing? We say he or she is "Raising Cain" do we not?
Sometimes we accompany the statement with laughter as though it is something
funny, which it isn't. We say of a young fellow that "He has to sow his wild

oats," or that he has to "Raise Cain," but does he? Is it right for us to
us off sin and misbehaviour with inane remarks such as that, or to let it
go as boys will be boys, or girls will do those things? Should we not
instead be striving to teach our children and ourselves to "Raise Abel"?
Wouldn't it be better for all concerned if we strove to emulate the good
brother instead of the bad one?

W^h all have fallen heir to the sins of the flesh because of our early
forfathers, but just because we are heirs of sin, does not mean that we
need to wallow in it to know what it is. There are those who would lead us
to this kind of thinking. & Because of it we have all kinds of loose living
today. We have free love, free sex, the new morality and all of the other
poor excuses for flagrant sin which are rampant on the scene today. Young
people ^{ask} ~~ask~~ us, "How can I know that I can live with a certain girl unless ^{or fellow}
unless we first live together for a while without getting married?" We
ld that ~~xxxxx~~ people must experiment with drugs to know how to avoid them.

If we follow this equation to its logical conclusion, then I suppose I
need to go out and rob a bank in order to know what stealing is. Or I must
murder someone in order to know enough not to kill. All of which makes no
more sense than any of the other arguments that can be used to salve the
conscience of anyone ^{who} ~~that~~ wants to flagrantly sin and do wrong. But God
tells us through Paul in the letter to the Romans, "The wages of sin is
death," and this certainly was what took place in the episode of Cain and
Abel. And whteher we want to admit it or not it happens in the lives of
each one of us when we disobey what God would have us to do.

~~xxxxxxthinkxxxxxxnotpayingxxpricexxforxxsin,xxbut~~

(Illustration Leonardo DeVinci and two models)

We may think we are not paying a penalty for sin, but we are. From
his illustration we can see that sin leaves its mark in some way upon the
sinner. Perhaps it is not always evident on the exterior physical features,
but it distorts ~~and~~ wrinkles, ~~the soul~~ and twists and warps the soul.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised:
in the city of our God, in the mountain of His
holiness.

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA
TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST OCTOBER 20, 1974
REV. RALPH C. LINK, PASTOR
MRS. MARILYN STEPHENSON, ORGANIST
MR. RALPH COOPER, CHOIR DIRECTOR
PAULA STEPHENSON, BRIAN KENNEDY - ACOLYTES

ORDER OF WORSHIP 11:00 A.M.
PRELUDE MUSIC: "THE LOST CHORD" SULLIVAN
 "TRANQUILITY" CLARKE

SILENT PRAYER

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN No. 50 "STILL, STILL WITH THEE"

*ASCRIPTION - CHORAL AMEN

*EXHORTATION

*CONFESSION (IN UNISON) "HAVE MERCY UPON US, O GOD, ACCORDING
TO THY LOVING-KINDNESS; ACCORDING TO THE MULTITUDE OF THY
TENDER MERCIES BLOT OUT OUR TRANSGRESSIONS. WASH US THOROUGH-
LY FROM OUR INIQUITIES, AND CLEANSE US FROM OUR SINS. FOR WE
ACKNOWLEDGE OUR TRANSGRESSIONS, AND OUR SIN IS EVER BEFORE US.
PURGE US AND WE SHALL BE CLEAN; WASH US AND WE SHALL BE WHITER
THAN SNOW. CREATE IN US CLEAN HEARTS, O GOD, AND RENEW A
RIGHT SPIRIT WITH US. CAST US NOT AWAY FROM THY PRESENCE,
AND TAKE NOT THY HOLY SPIRIT FROM US. AMEN." - --PSALM 51

*KYRIE (CHOIR, CONGREGATION AND PASTOR)

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON - CHORAL AMEN

*PRAISE

*PASTOR: O LORD OPEN OUR LIPS.

*PEOPLE: AND OUR MOUTH SHALL SHOW FORTH THY PRAISE.

*DOXOLOGY No. 551

SCRIPTURE LESSON: GENESIS 4: 1-15

HYMN No. 275 "O LOVE OF GOD MOST FULL"

*AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH (APOSTLES' CREED)

*GLORIA PATRI

*CALL TO PRAYER

*PASTOR: THE LORD BE WITH YOU.

*PEOPLE: AND WITH THY SPIRIT.

*PASTOR: LET US PRAY.

*PRAYER AND PRAYER RESPONSE

BAPTISM OF INFANT - JENNIFER MARIE SYBERT BORN SEPT. 5
TO MR. & MRS. ROBERT SYBERT

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

"AUTUMN"

STICKLES

SOLO: "IN THE IMAGE OF GOD" PETERSON
 " - - - VON MALONEY

SERMON: "RAISING ABEL!"

PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

*HYMN OF DEDICATION No. 289 "SOLDIERS OF CHRIST, ARISE"
(STANDING FOR ALL THREE VERSES)

*BENEDICTION AND THREE FOLD AMEN

ORGAN POSTLUDE: "POSTLUDE IN F" THYGERSON

----- *CONGREGATION STANDING -----

THE LOVELY FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR HAVE BEEN PLACED BY

MR. & MRS. GUY ARMSTRONG IN MEMORY OF "LOVED ONES".

SERVING AS USHERS TODAY ARE: *PAUL RIEMER, DARYL TAIT,
JOHN DREHER, GARY PENAR, DON KINGSLEY.

DEACONESS MRS. ANN WILLIAMS WILL REPRESENT COUNCIL AT
THE DOOR TODAY.

TONIGHT - 7:00 - YOUTH FELLOWSHIP - EACH YOUTH IS
ASKED TO BRING A STAPLER.

MONDAY - 7:30 - FIDELITY BIBLE CLASS MEETING.

WED. - 7:30 - CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION COMM. MEETING.

NURSERY WILL BE PROVIDED TODAY BY MRS. MARGARET COVERT
AND PATTY BASEHORE.

THE ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY WAS 212.

HOSPITALIZED: MISS CLARA SHAKELY, MRS. ELIZABETH
CLARK, BOMH; EVERETT McCANDLESS - WEST PENN HOSP.
PITTS.; LEO BALDAUF - VA HOSPITAL.

WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND OUR CONGRATULATIONS TO

MR. & MRS. COYLE FOWLER WHO ARE CELEBRATING THEIR
40TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY TODAY - BEST WISHES.

WORLD COMMUNITY DAY - FRIDAY - NOV. 1ST AT GRACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH - 7:30 P.M. SUBJECT - "THEY HAVE A
DREAM" BY MRS. OAKLEY WEAVER. SPONSORED BY GREATER
AREA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES.

A BABY GIRL WAS BORN TO MR. & MRS. LARRY R. FALKNER,
41 CAROL DRIVE SAXONBURG 16056 - OCT. 1ST. NORTH
HILLS PASSAVANT HOSP. (MRS. FORMER ANN STROUP)

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR VOTING
TO SUPPORT ME IN MY TRIP TO DAYTONA BEACH NEXT MARCH
FOR THE EVANGELISM SEMINAR. WITHOUT THEIR SUPPORT,
I COULD NOT ATTEND. - - - THANK YOU, DEB MELTON.

REV. GRANVILLE COOPER WAS MADE CHAPLAIN OF SUNNYVIEW
HOME - HE IS SO HAPPY AND WE ARE HAPPY FOR HIM.

NEXT SUNDAY - 3:00 P.M. - SPECIAL COMMUNION SERVICE
FOR THE SHUT-INS, AT THE CHURCH.

from all this we gather jeal something from which 2
need B delivered B4 consumes individ completely &
~~need~~ leads dire circum.

C guilty overwhelm anger, read, "So C was very angry
Anger nother emot need control
Uncontrolled anger perhaps been respons more deths
bo ly injury any other emot.
Vic Hugo "Eride robs me of God, envy of my neighbor
anger of myself."

From this short vs C inflame jeal/anger/consum anger
4 brother, ~~WHICH CROT IN HATRED.~~
So much so, he lured bros field kill him
C's action separate from G.

Even 2 this day when some 1 in wrongdoing what
do say?
We say, "He/she raise C," do we not?

Sometimes we laff as tho funny which isn't.
We say bout young fellow, "Must sow wild oats."
or, "He must raise C."
But does he?

Is rt us say boys B boys, or girls do those things
Is rt us pass off sin this way?

Should we not insted B strive teach children/selves,
"Raise Abel?
Wouldn't B better all concern we strove emulate
good bros insted bad 1?

We all fall heirs sins flesh Bcause 4fathers,
but just cause we heirs sin, does not mean we need
wallow in it, 2 know what it is.

There those who lead us this kind think, & because
of we have all kinds loose living 2day.
We have free love/free sex/new morality & all other
poor excuses flagrant sin which rampant on scene 2da

Yg peop ask us, "How can I know I can live with cert
girl unless I 1st live 2gether no get married?"
WE R told yg peop must experiment drugs know how to
avoid them.

If we follow this equation to logical conclusion, I
suppose I need go out rob bank know what steal is.
Or, I need murder some1 know what kill is,

All which make no more sense than other arguments
can B used salve conscience any1 who wants flag-
rantly do wrong & sin.

G. tell us thru P. in Romans, "The wages of sin is
deth."

this wvert took place episode C. & A.

"Raising Abel!"

Text: Gen 4:5, "But for Cain and his offering He
had no regard. So Cain was very
angry and his countenance fell."

Scripture Gen. 4:1-15

From story Cain/Abel lot said, lot left undaid
We read 1st part 4th chap A shepherd/Cain farmer
1 keeper sheep/other tiller of ground
Both worthwhile reputable occupations.

Then read C brot offer fruit of ground
& A bring 1stlings of flock as offer to G.
Read Lord had regard for A & offer, then TEXT (rea

Several theories as why A accepted & C not
1st A brot animal offer & C did not
Animal could B sac & shed blood cleanse from sin
& C brot grain/cereal offer & not proper offer
If theory correct, ask, "Where does state C & A to
bring animal offer?"

Answer: this not part text & not spelled out here.

2nd theory: A brot animal no spot blemish & C brot
second ~~xxx~~ best of what he had.
This plausible & explain why G regard A, & not C.
Also from this we derive bring best to G.

Along all this we C logical progression sin in world
& in man life stemming from orig sin Ad/Eve in garden
we read (Text).

thus 1st fruits sin
We & not only outward anger/but C hatred/jealousy
all cause some 1 looked on more favor

Do not mean imply A more special site of G,
but must realize Something A did placed his offer
ahead of C's offer.

Hence, must believe A offer better than C.

If look C's feelings C they still with us 2day &
need dealt with

C must had intense feel jealousy Bause statement,
"and his countenance fell."

Other words, he dissapointed cause offer no receiv
like A's

Thus C give vent intense feel if left uncontroll
gnaws/eats persons very insides & erupts flagrant
act to person whom directed

Weos dict define Jeal as some1 who resentful/envious
Chrysostom "As a moth gnaws a garment, so doth envy
consume a man."

& whether we admit or not, it happens in lives
each us, when we disobey God have us do,

(Illustration Leonardo DeVinci & 2 models)

We may think no pay penalty sin, but we ~~do~~
from this illus we C sin leaves mark someway upon
soul.

Perhaps it not always evident exterior phys feature
but distorts/wrinkles/twists/warps soul.

But prob with man always been he equates life that
of others.

We look life of C exclaim, "I do things that wrong,
but I no guilty murder my bros."

Perhaps not, but we can B so overcome jeal, we defame
some1 life/character we all but kill physically.

We may show so much hatred 2 nother, we not only fil
selves such poisonness thots that stunt Xpian growth
but may unwittingly cause some1 do something rash
by our rumors or gossip.

We may Bcome so filled anger we provoke some1 lash
out 2 nother in violent words/deeds.

Yes, may not be guilty as C,
but we all capable his deeds in diff ways equal dedly

But as all such area life, there chance live act as
should.

We need not resign selves be separated from G as C
4 even tho C bansih from presence of G, still he
no destroyed,

This indication G ~~not will~~ destroy His creation.

We may assur. pardon, "G has no pleasure deth of
wicked, but that wicked turn from his way & live."

This only poss by come 2 Xp. confess sin & trust
Him 4 forgiveness,

But also means we each must begin "Raising Abel," in
lives, insted "Raise Cain."

Anyone can "Raise Cain" but takes person wants live
as Xpian to "Raise Abel. A PERSON WHO WANTS PORN AGAIN"

& thus by "Raising Abel" we show we followers Xp.

& we can not only live this way in our lives, but
we can pass it on 2 our fams,/friends.

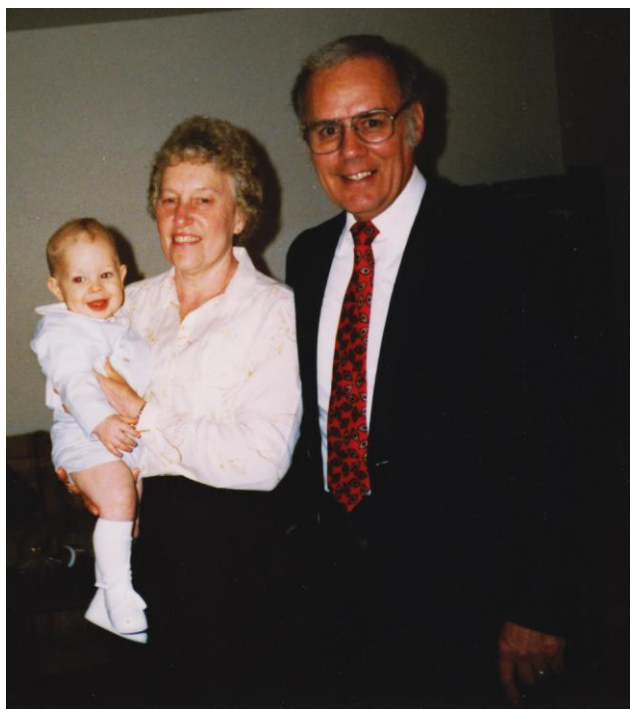
Let us all strive live anew by "Raising Abel."

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
 Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
 Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.